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INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENTAL  
STUDIES

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**SAFETY**

beverly hills  
general plan

11-75



Note: On March 6, 1976, by Resolution No. 76-R-5427, the Beverly Hills City Council adopted pages 1 through 7 of this document.

## SAFETY ELEMENT ABSTRACT

1. Impetus: State requirement.
2. Existing Situation.
  - 2.1. During the last decade, the number of fires in Beverly Hills has declined, but the total dollar losses resulting from fires has increased slightly.
  - 2.2. Most fires in Beverly Hills are in residential structures (about 60 percent of all fires); of these, slightly more than one-half are in multifamily structures (1974/1975).
3. Existing Policies.
  - 3.1. Uniform Building Code, Chapter 3, Title 3. Standards of fire-related matters of building construction.
  - 3.2. Insurance Services Organization (ISO). Measures municipalities ability to protect itself from major fires and conflagrations.
  - 3.3. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Publishes nationally recognized standards for fire protection, such as the time temperature curve.
4. Issue: Evaluate the adequacy of the service now provided and identify improvements which might be necessary.
5. Proposed solution:
  - 5.1. The overall level of service is considered to be very good for municipal fire safety. The Fire Department points out, however, that although the capability to fight a fire in a high-rise building exists, the ability to fight such a fire should be reinforced so as to be at a level consistent with the overall level of service provided. This would require either greater protection built in to high-rise structures or additional fire fighting equipment for high-rise fires.
  - 5.2. At such times as deemed appropriate, the overall level of service could be improved via modifications to the building code, or the staff and equipment of the Fire Department, or both. (The Beverly Hills Fire Department is especially concerned about their ability to fight fires in medium-or high-rise structures.) Methods to achieve these goals are cited in the Fire Department's Master Plan for Fire Protection (not adopted).

L Beverly Hills, Dept of pl.  
City pl. Bev. Hills  
Fire prev. Admin " "



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Safety Element Abstract

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6. Environmental Impact (i.e., impacts if Element were implemented.)  
An EIR was developed that concluded that there would be no significant  
impact if the Element were implemented.



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## 1. INTRODUCTION.

### 1.1. Purposes of Element.

This document is one of the nine State-required elements that must be included in the General Plans of all jurisdictions in California. It is supposed to serve two purposes:

- To guide decision makers relative to policy matters associated with safety and
- To provide decision makers and the public with accurate data on safety factors within the jurisdiction.

The document follows the format suggested by the State and is intended to fulfill the requirements of the State law. There is one important exception to this: Because geologic hazards were discussed in the Seismic Safety Element,\* they are not included here.

### 1.2. Objectives of Element.

- To identify and adopt a system of adequate fire protection which will serve the specific needs of the City of Beverly Hills.
- To provide the optimum level of fire protection for the City of Beverly Hills.
- To produce the maximum cost-benefit ratio for fire protection expenditures.
- To coincide with and reinforce the goals of the City's General Plan.
- To define and prioritize Fire Department programs.
- To clarify fire protection responsibilities of all City Departments and other private and governmental agencies.
- To provide a framework for measuring effectiveness of fire protection system.
- To establish a system for revision and updating fire protection system.
- To protect life and property by preventing hazardous fires.
- To prevent loss of life and property from uncontrolled hazards such as fire, panic, explosions, physical entrapments, floods, dangerous chemicals and gases, and radioactive materials.
- To provide paramedical services as necessary for preservation of life.
- To provide a trained and properly equipped personnel cadre for natural or wartime disasters.

\* Adopted October 7, 1975, Resolution 75-R-5326.



## 2. PLAN.

The Beverly Hills Fire Department is effectively serving the needs of the community, and this is reflected by several facts. First, the Department has an overall rating of "3" by the Insurance Services Office (ISO) that is considered very good.

Further, since fire protection levels have improved during the the last decade, the City has requested that the ISO review their status and consider a rating to reflect the improved capacities. Now, the City has a better system of water supply, water storage, and water mains.

(The Insurance Services Office (ISO) ranks each municipality in the United States. They rate them on a scale from "1" to "10" with "1" as best. These ratings are based on the ability of a municipality to protect itself from major fires and conflagrations (fire department equipment and manpower, water storage and distribution system, etc.).).

Secondly, in only 1.2 percent of the cases of 1973-1974 has the Beverly Hills Fire Department needed the supplementary help of the County or City of Los Angeles Fire Departments.

The Beverly Hills Fire Department's prevention strategy seems to be effective. The number of fires has decreased by 42 percent from a high of 202 in 1967 to 84 in FY 1973-1974. 84 fires amount to the lowest number of fires that were recorded for the entire 1964-1973/1974 decade. And, finally, in constant 1973-1974 dollars, the total dollar loss from fires has increased only slightly. For example, in 1967 constant dollars, in 1967, there was a loss of \$334,371 and in 1973/1974, there was a loss of \$364,849, or an increase of 9.1 percent.

In the future, the City may wish to improve its fire fighting abilities. The figure illustrates a strategy available to the City to achieve this goal. The figure is based on improving the City's fire rating and increasing either the Department's abilities to fight fires or to improve the fire-related features of building construction in Beverly Hills or both.

As shown on the figure, to improve the rating and, therefore, the fire fighting effectiveness of the City, consideration should be given to:

- a. improving the building code regarding fire-related matters. For example, automatic sprinkler systems could be required in all commercial or office structures. Automatic smoke (products of combustion) detectors could be required in all multiple and single family dwellings.
- b. improving the Fire Department's capabilities.
- c. combination of a. and b.

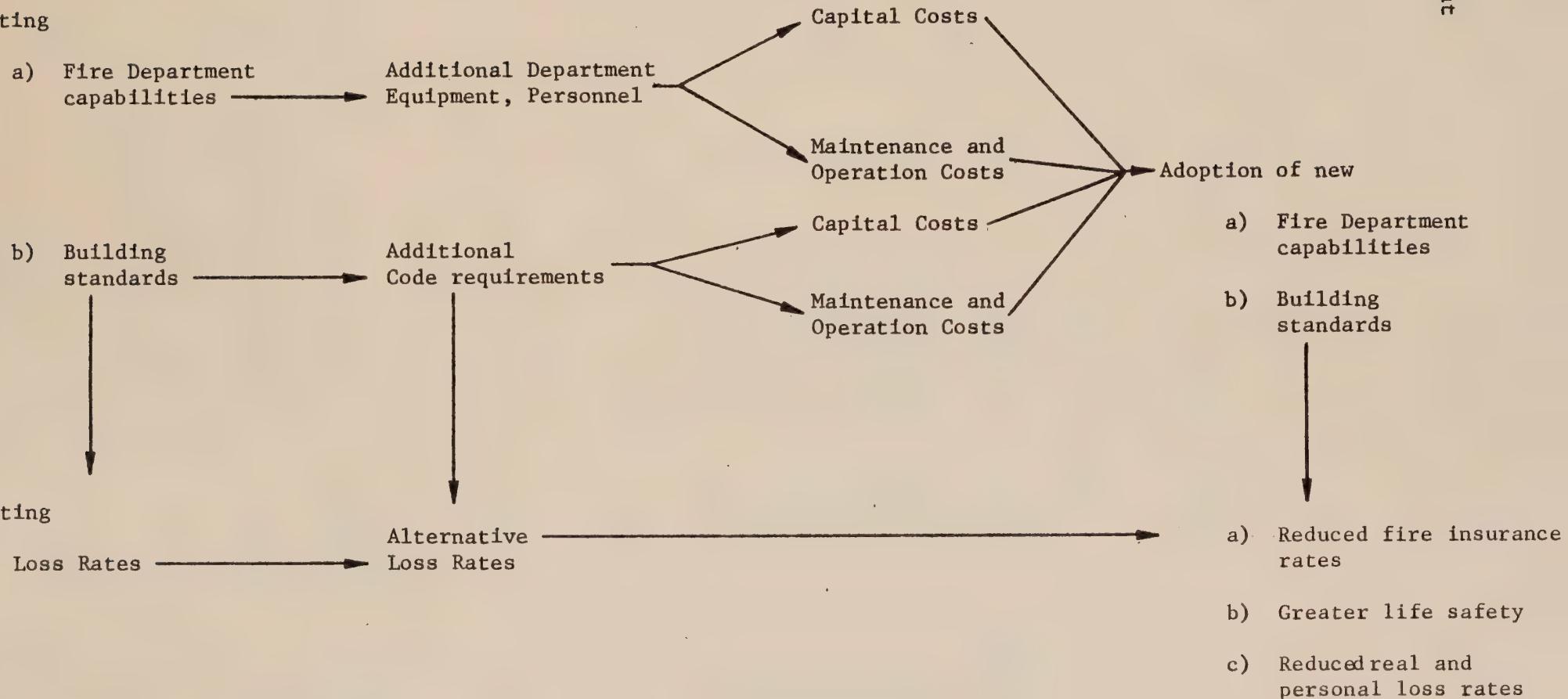
The Fire Department's Master Plan for Fire Protection enumerates methods to achieve a. and b. above. This document is now being reviewed by the Office of the City Manager.



Figure

Strategy for Reevaluation of Fire Capabilities

Existing



Source: Beverly Hills Department of City Planning, October, 1975.



3. BACKGROUND DATA.

The following tables describe the fire fighting activities of the Beverly Hills Fire Department.

TABLE 1

Comparison of Beverly Hills Fire Losses, 1964 to 1975

Year	Number of Fires	City Assessed Valuation	Total Fire Loss	Percent of Assessed Valuation
1964	145	241,513,140	430,563	0.18
1965	148	250,518,770	176,476	0.07
1966	196	293,493,580	942,905	0.32
1967	202	295,139,390	334,371	0.11
1968	131	297,326,921	137,515	0.04
1969	108	295,642,822	170,251	0.05
1970	99	306,514,469	183,860	0.06
1971	101	322,541,205	773,555	0.24
1972-73	100	345,418,422	315,290	0.09
1973-74	84	349,289,060	568,743	0.16

Source: Beverly Hills Fire Department, June, 1975.

TABLE 2

Summary of Beverly Hills Fires in which a Dollar Loss Occurred,  
Fiscal Year 1973-1974

Number	Fires Percent	Classification	Content Loss (in dollars)	Structural Loss (in dollars)	Combined Loss (in dollars)
22	26.2	Single-family dwelling	52,365	102,300	154,665
25	29.8	Multifamily dwelling	54,990	53,350	108,340
10	11.9	Commercial, Industrial	203,760	52,160	255,920
0	0.0	Hotels	0	0	0
6	7.1	Private garages, other buildings	9,300	19,330	28,630
21	25.0	Grass, rubbish, misc.	10	21,178	21,188
84	100.0	TOTAL	320,425	248,318	568,743

Source: Beverly Hills Fire Department, June, 1975.



TABLE 3

Summary of All Fires and Alarms in Beverly Hills,  
Fiscal Year 1973-1974

Type	Number	Type	Number
Bomb Scares	20	Incendiary	
Electrical		Malicious mischief	20
Fluorescent light ballasts	27	Deliberate incendiary	18
Electric motors	22	Subtotal	38
Electric appliances	35	Motor Vehicle	
Transformers	6	Backfire in carburetor	38
Defective wiring	19	Smoking and matches	4
Air conditioning motor	3	Electrical causes	28
Clothes dryers	2	Motor accident	1
Street power lines	11	Overheated transmission	0
Other electrical causes	3	Other vehicular causes	21
Subtotal	128	Subtotal	92
False Alarms		Smoking and matches	18
Malicious and mischievous	62	Miscellaneous alarms	
Honest mistakes	31	Gasoline washdown	54
Accidental alarms	11	Smoke scares	99
Subtotal	104	Elevator rescues and other	41
Heating		Plumbing defects	52
Defective appliances	20	Smell of gas	33
Gas ignited or exploded	11	Other outdoor fires	12
Candles	1	Outside the City	14
Barbecues	1	Grass or brush	11
Fireplaces	9	Flammable liquids	2
Other heating causes	1	Other miscellaneous causes	62
Subtotal	43	Engine Co. Rescue (medical)	545
Housekeeping		Subtotal	925
Grease in oven or stove	35	Undetermined causes	31
Trash and rubbish	24		
Other housekeeping	8	TOTAL ALARMS	1466
Subtotal	67		

Source: Beverly Hills Fire Department, June, 1975.



Several policies or standards affect fire protection in Beverly Hills. These include the following:

- Beverly Hills Municipal Code Chapter 3, Title 3 (Fire Code). Uniform Building Code. Standards on fire-related matters of building construction.
- Insurance Services Office (ISO). A municipality's capability to protect itself from major fires and conflagrations.
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Standard flashover time (time temperature curve) reference Page 8-6 and many other standards.
- Water storage and distribution system including size of mains and fire hydrants.



4. GLOSSARY OF TERMS.

Standard flashover time. The time required for combustible materials within a confined area to flash over. Refers to the NFPA time temperature curve, page 8-6 or 8-133.

Example: at 600° confined combustibles, flashover occurs in five minutes.



## 5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT.

### 5.1. Introduction.

As of December 17, 1973, all general plan elements that are to be individually adopted must have an environmental impact report as part of the adoption process. This action was taken pursuant to Division 13, Chapter 2.6, Section 21083 of the Public Resource Code. This portion of the document, therefore, analyzes the environmental impacts that are likely to occur if the Safety Element were implemented.

### 5.2. Project Description.

#### 5.2.1. General.

The Safety Element identifies the existing fire hazards and levels of fire service in Beverly Hills; it evaluates these; and it includes recommendations for action and policy development that would, if implemented, improve the environment by mitigating fire hazards in the City.

If adopted, the Element would be incorporated into the City of Beverly Hills General Plan. Therefore, it would serve as a data source and tool to evaluate and/or strive to increase safety levels in the City for elected officials, commissions, staff, and members of the public.

#### 5.2.2. Present Program.

Several standards are used by the City of Beverly Hills regarding fire hazards and fire fighting. These include the following:

- Uniform Building Code, Chapter 3, Title 3. Fire-related building code standards.
- Insurance Services Organization (ISO). Number, type of vehicles.
- National Fire Protective Association (NFPA). Standard flashover time -- response time.

#### 5.2.3. Future Programs.

None. However, the Beverly Hills Fire Department has prepared a document entitled Master Plan for Fire Protection, which describes fire hazards and proposes various solutions thereto.

#### 5.2.4. Methodology.

In preparing the Element, the following steps were taken:

- Data on fire hazards was analyzed; and
- Possible solutions were developed.



5.3. Environmental Setting.

5.3.1. General.

The Environmental Setting of this EIR was discussed in the Environmental Setting Report, published in June, 1975, by the City of Beverly Hills. This report deals with a variety of physical and social factors that influence the environment.

5.4. Environmental Impacts: None.

5.5. Mitigation Measure Proposed to Minimize the Impact: None.

5.6. Adverse Environmental Effects which Cannot Be Avoided if the Element Were Implemented: None.

5.7. Alternatives to the Proposed Action: No project, i.e., no Safety Element.

Adoption of this alternative would place the City in violation of Section 65302(g) of the Government Code and might make Beverly Hills liable to legal sanctions, including mandamus actions and possible injunctions to insure a "proper" Element.

5.8. The Relationship between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity: No effect.

5.9. Irreversible Environmental Changes which Would Be Involved in the Proposed Action Should It Be Implemented: None.

5.10. Growth-Inducing Impact: None.



6. APPENDIX.

Comments on draft Environmental Impact Report: None.





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#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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